

CHINATOWN

PROPOSED COMMUNITY PLAN

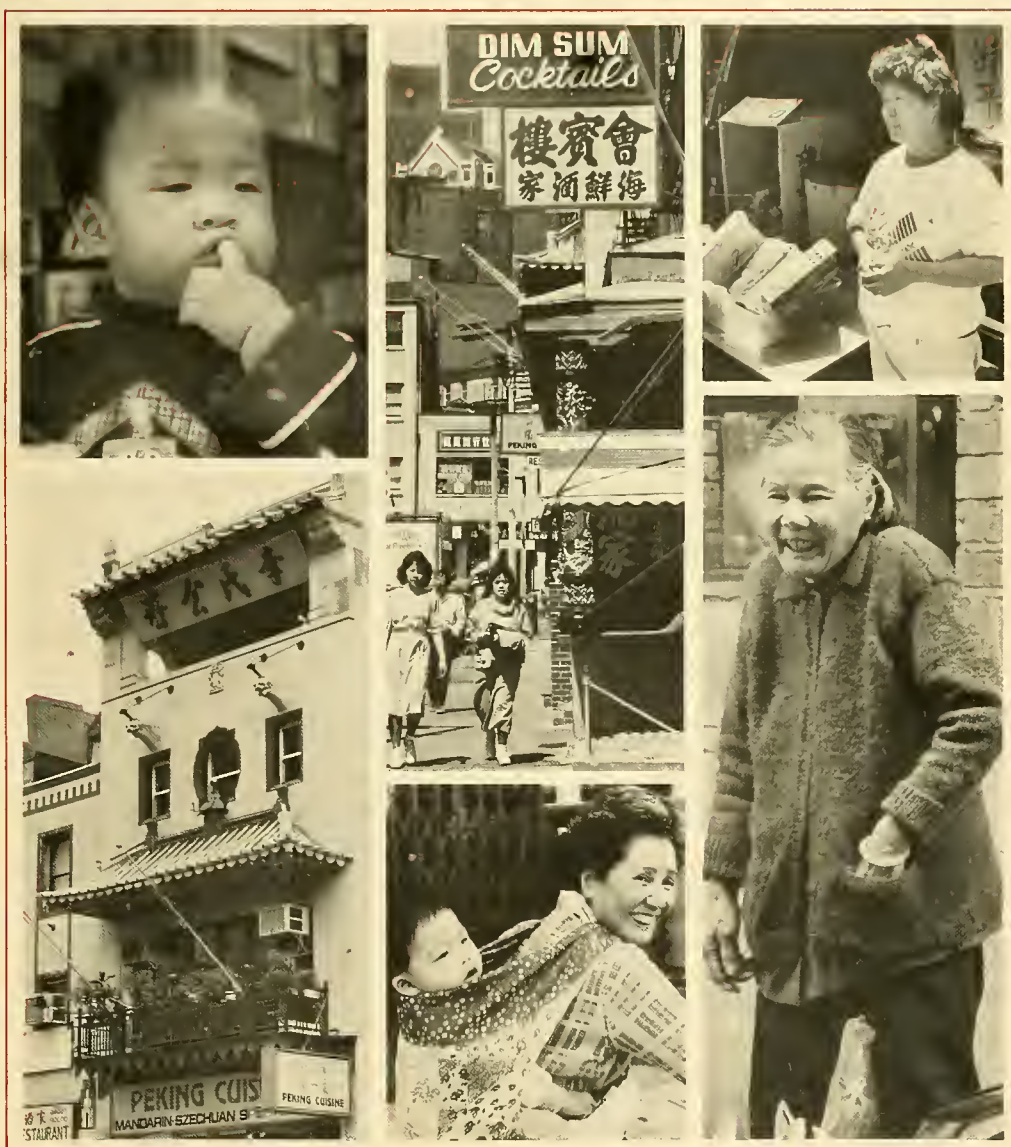
華埠社區整體計劃

A PLAN TO MANAGE GROWTH

FEBRUARY 1990

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CHINATOWN / SOUTH COVE
NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

CITY OF BOSTON
Raymond L. Flynn, Mayor

BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY
Stephen Coyle, Director

Dear Fellow Citizen:

Boston's Chinatown community represents a unique and special part of our city's collection of culturally rich and ethnically diverse neighborhoods. For the Asian community in the greater Boston area, Chinatown serves as the principal center of economic, social and cultural activity. Located in the center of Boston, this century-old community also contributes much to the vibrancy and high quality of life enjoyed by Bostonians and visitors to our city alike.

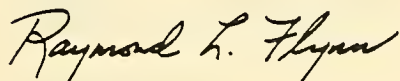
At the dawn of the new decade, Boston's Chinatown is a community at a crossroads. Chinatown is a community facing major challenges, challenges to its identity, its preservation, and its future. It is also a community of significant strength of character, with the will and potential to meet its challenges and to shape a future of its choice.

The master plan outlined herein represents a joint and unprecedented effort of the Chinatown community and the City of Boston to chart the direction of Chinatown's future. The two-and-one-half years of effort and commitment invested in the plan's formulation have served to clarify its fundamental goals: preserving and enhancing the long-term viability of Chinatown itself. The plan aims to achieve these goals by addressing the challenges of providing affordable housing and community services for a population that tripled between 1950 and 1987, of fostering neighborhood business and economic development, and of effectively managing issues such as traffic, land use and environmental protection.

As Chinatown pursues the implementation of this plan and related zoning initiatives, the advocacy and participation of community residents and leaders will continue to be vital ingredients. For its part, the City of Boston will continue to ensure that the economic benefits of downtown development, and the economic opportunities generated by that development, are equitably shared with the Chinatown community. Working together, we can achieve great things.

I wish to congratulate the Chinatown community on the historic development of this plan for the future. I look forward, in the years ahead, to working with all of you toward its successful implementation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Raymond L. Flynn". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Raymond L. Flynn

Mayor

Dear Members and Friends of the Chinatown Community:

Two-and-a half years ago, the Chinatown-South Cove Neighborhood Council and the Boston Redevelopment Authority concluded that the planning principles affecting Chinatown must change. The needs of the community had to be the focus point.

Without careful planning and serious input from the Chinatown community, proposed development would severely affect its future. These projects include the new Central Artery - Third Harbor Tunnel and Massachusetts Turnpike projects, the mega development projects bordering Chinatown, and institutional expansion in the community.

To plan for the future and manage development, the Chinatown community and the city have been working together to prepare the Master Plan and new zoning regulations for the future of Chinatown. This effort has meant many long hours of hard work by the CNC and the BRA staff. The master plan and new zoning are the product of many diverse groups, agencies and institutions which make up the Chinatown community. It is not just the product of a single person or group. It is truly a community plan that we can all feel proud of.

The master plan is the basis for future growth and expansion. It provides the framework for much needed affordable housing, expansion to the Chinatown Gateway area, expansion to Massachusetts Turnpike Air-Rights, and integration of institutional planning within the Chinatown Master Plan.

I would like to thank all the people that have made this plan a reality. A special thank you to Mayor Raymond Flynn and Director Stephen Coyle for their unwavering support of Chinatown, to the CNC Master Plan Ad-Hoc Committee and the Land Use and Development Committee for their input and dedication.

Very truly yours,

Chinatown-South Cove Neighborhood Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William Moy, P.E.", with a stylized, cursive script.

William Moy, P.E.
Co-Moderator

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Chinatown Community Plan adopted with the zoning amendments will also mark the first time in the history of Chinatown when the community needs and aspirations have guided the city's blueprint for the future growth and development of the neighborhood. It embodies the common vision and community spirit that has evolved through this historic grassroots planning effort for Chinatown.

COMMUNITY GROWTH AND NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION

For the Chinatown community, the celebration of a unique cultural heritage and tradition has to be accompanied by the possibility and the promise of change for a better future. As Chinatown enters the 1990s, the historic neighborhood is faced with a set of new opportunities and resources that are critical to the realization of its future growth and development.

These opportunities and resources have resulted from the efforts of community advocates and the City policies that guided downtown development boom through the 1980s to produce housing and economic benefits for Boston's neighborhoods. The Chinatown community's aspiration for change and action has been spurred on by the demise of the neighboring Combat Zone along with the planned renewal of the nearby Midtown Cultural District as a cultural hub and South Station as a transportation and technology center.

To build and improve the future for its rapidly growing residential and commercial community, Chinatown should act on these immediate opportunities. However, change and growth also prompt an uncertainty about the long-term viability and the environmental quality of the densely populated immigrant neighborhood now faced with the mostly upscale transformation of its adjacent districts, increased traffic, and rising property values.

The challenge confronting Chinatown as a community of Asians and Asian Americans is not simply to protect the existing residential and business sectors, but to broaden its housing and economic base. At the same time, the community wants to retain its historic role as a

centrally located anchor for immigrant families, small businesses, and community services. The task confronting Chinatown as a center city neighborhood is not simply to renovate or rebuild its physical environment. The challenge is also to enhance a unique cultural heritage that is embodied in its buildings, streets, and the lively pedestrian environment, while enabling a progressive transformation of the physical appearance of the neighborhood.

The community-based comprehensive development plan for Chinatown goes beyond the physical distribution of land uses, the manipulation of urban form, and the management of traffic and transportation infrastructure. The social and economic consequences are the driving force behind the district's grassroots planning. The planning and development of Chinatown aims to create opportunities and resources for affordable housing, good jobs, community services, economic diversification, transportation access, and civic amenities for recreation and cultural and arts programming.

Proactive community participation, public education, capacity building, and community empowerment have been integrated in the community-based planning process since it was formally launched by the Chinatown-South Cove Neighborhood Council and the City in July of 1987. The long-term success of the plan will depend on the support, initiative, and ingenuity of the community, public agencies, and private entities.

POLICY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The long-term viability and prosperity of Chinatown as a historic residential neighborhood and a cultural, business, and service center will ultimately enrich Boston as a city of neighborhoods that thrives on its diverse heritage. Guided by this common vision, the policy goals and objectives of the Chinatown Community Plan are:

- o To strengthen the family oriented nature of the working class neighborhood by containing the Combat Zone activities and creating affordable housing;
- o To broaden Chinatown's economic base by reinforcing community services and providing opportunities for future expansion and diversification of business and employment.

- o To enhance Chinatown's cultural heritage and historic legacies by preserving its unique streetscape and community network;
- o To protect Chinatown's historic land base through the redirection of institutional development to the periphery of the district and the prevention of further infringement by highway construction; and
- o To connect future Chinatown with the Midtown Cultural District, the South End, and the South Station area by building land bridges including the Hinge Block, the Massachusetts Turnpike Air-rights area, and the Chinatown Gateway area.

The supply of quality housing will be increased with a priority placed on affordable family housing. This will be achieved with the implementation of the Chinatown Housing Improvement Program on public parcels in Chinatown and the use of public resources including housing linkage contributions generated from commercial development in the abutting Midtown Cultural District and the South Station Economic Development Area.

Community service programs that support and guide immigrants through various stages of acculturation will be expanded and enhanced. Public resources on job-related training programs and child care will be expanded with job contributions and child care provisions required of downtown commercial development.

While modest-scale neighborhood businesses are encouraged to locate in the historic core of Chinatown, large scale commercial expansions will be directed to the edges of the neighborhood where the transportation infrastructure can support increased traffic. The future Gateway site will further provide for the diversification of businesses and employment to complement the traditional economic core.

The rich diversity and vitality of the Chinatown built environment will be enhanced while its image, visibility, and environmental quality is reinforced. Meanwhile, the unique underlying social network comprised of family associations and service providers will be reinforced.

Transportation access to and from Chinatown will be maximized, while its pedestrian environment and connection with the surrounding districts will be upgraded with the improvement in parking and vehicular circulation. The Boston Transportation Department and

the Chinatown-South Cove Neighborhood Council are currently developing a traffic improvement plan and improvement program for Chinatown.

The existing land base of Chinatown will be protected from downtown encroachment on its northern and western edges, from institutional expansion in its midst, and from transportation construction at its eastern and southern boundaries.

In addition, land bridge connecting Chinatown with the neighboring districts will be built, including: the Hinge Block linking commercial Chinatown core with the Midtown Cultural District, enabling the continued expansion by Asian small businesses and enterprises; the Turnpike Air-rights area linking residential Chinatown with Bay Village and South End residential enclaves; and the Gateway site linking Chinatown with the economic opportunities and resources to be generated with the development of the South Station area as a transportation and technological center.

In short, the overall policy goal of the Chinatown Community Plan is to generate a social, economic, and physical environment that supports and nurtures community growth without undermining the quality of life or destroying the singular identity and legacies of the neighborhood dating from the late 19th century.

The final implementation of the Chinatown Community Plan will increase Asian ownership of land area in Chinatown to over fifty percent for the first time in the history of neighborhood. Ultimately, the future of Chinatown will be determined not only by public actions or private initiatives, but also by the Asian community itself.

II. FRAMEWORK FOR THE PLAN

1 CHINATOWN: A COMMUNITY AT A CROSSROADS

Chinatown is a community at a crossroads. For more than 30 years, the neighborhood has struggled with highway engineers, institutional builders, and urban planners. Community needs and aspirations were secondary to those determined by the city, the regional economy, and the nearby medical institutions. Over the years, the Chinatown neighborhood, which more than tripled in population from 1950 to 1987, lost more than half of its land to new roads and medical institutions.

The quality of life in Chinatown was diminished by the presence of the nearby Combat Zone and the increasing volume of through-traffic on neighborhood streets. Meanwhile, Chinatown was cut off by the Combat Zone from the city's central business district, nearby residential neighborhoods, the Boston Common, and the Public Garden.

The growth in population, the loss of land, and the rapidly rising property value have created a crisis situation in the neighborhood. Chinatown is in need of more affordable housing, better economic opportunities, effective traffic relief, expanded community services, and improved open space and recreation facilities. Not only does Chinatown seek to reinforce its historic role as an immigrant anchor in the city, the community also aspires to grow and to expand in the future.

The Critical Turning Point

A key event for the neighborhood was the creation of the Chinatown-South Cove Neighborhood Council in 1985. The council was established by the Flynn Administration, as part of a new focus on the neighborhood issues. Shortly thereafter, the disparate forces of neighborhood growth and institutional development collided over a proposal to build a 600-car garage for institutional use on a Chinatown site.

In March 1987, the Neighborhood Council voted to oppose the garage plan. The BRA supported the neighborhood's position and concurred on the need for a community-based

comprehensive planning process to guide future land use decisions in Chinatown.

Now, community members, with the support of the city, are planning Chinatown's future, building new housing, starting new economic enterprises, expanding service programs, and improving the environment. Working with the open community forum provided by the neighborhood council, Chinatown's leaders and advocates have been coordinating a grassroots planning process which makes the community the central reference point. Credit for turning around planning policies for Chinatown goes to the community, its social, cultural, and business leaders, and the Neighborhood Council.

This critical turning point in the history of Chinatown land use planning and development culminated with the 1988 designation of the Quincy School Community Council (QSCC) as the redeveloper of a city-owned parcel. The designation, which enables QSCC to expand and upgrade its long-standing efforts to provide affordable child care and other community service and education programs, was challenged in court by the neighboring institutions, but the city and the community prevailed. The court confirmed the city's and the community's position that city planning should respond to changing socio-economic conditions in order to address community needs for affordable housing and services.

The Chinatown Community Plan:

"In danger there is opportunity."

-- A Chinese idiom

The initiative for a new planning effort comes at a critical time. Chinatown is again confronted with the challenge of growth in nearby areas while institutional expansion continues in the neighborhood. The state is planning to depress the Central Artery and build a new Seaport Access Road. The revitalization of the Midtown Cultural District is creating a new mixed-use neighborhood. In addition, the One Lincoln Street and Parcel 18 Parcel-to-Parcel Project launched by the city and the state signals the economic resurgence of South Station, where the development plan for a transportation and technological center is also taking shape.

Affordable housing, jobs, businesses, and other much needed neighborhood resources can be generated for Chinatown by a vibrant economy under the guidance of the city's creative policies that support community growth.

However, the many low- and moderate-income families and small businesses that typify the neighborhood are susceptible to displacement and gentrification that can result from an escalating real estate market.

The final outcome of the increased property value in Chinatown combined with the mostly upscale transformation of its neighboring districts depend as much on public policies supporting Chinatown as the choices made by the Chinatown community.

The policies established by the Chinatown Community Plan mark the first time in Chinatown's history that the neighborhood's needs and aspirations have been systematically addressed through a proactive, community-based planning process. Henceforth, community interests and aspirations are recognized as the central reference point in addressing institutional expansion, downtown encroachment, and public construction that exert an impact on the quality of life of the neighborhood. The Chinatown community, with the support of the city, is shaping its own vision and directing its own future.

2 COMMUNITY-BASED MASTER PLAN PROCESS

The unprecedented joint master plan effort for Chinatown was formally launched by the Chinatown-South Cove Neighborhood Council (CNC) and the City in July of 1987, with the formation of the CNC Master Plan Committee and BRA's implementation of a four-part planning survey for Chinatown, focusing on housing conditions, land uses, neighborhood business and employer characteristics, and user characteristics.

This historic planning initiative for the Chinatown neighborhood is part of the comprehensive rezoning effort undertaken by the BRA for Boston's downtown and several other neighborhoods to develop a citywide plan to manage growth affecting these areas. Following a year and a half of consultation and review with community leaders from various neighborhoods, the Downtown Interim Planning Overlay District (IPOD) was adopted by the City's Zoning Commission in September of 1987. The Downtown IPOD which includes Chinatown as one of the ten special study areas sets up the legal framework for rezoning studies through a community-based planning process.

The community-based master plan initiative for Chinatown also followed long years of community advocacy by the Chinatown Housing and Land Development Task Force. The

collaborative master plan effort undertaken by the CNC and the BRA was able to help reinforce a broad-based community participation throughout the master plan process conducted in two phases. Active community outreach constituted the core of the grassroots actions coordinated by the Neighborhood Council.

The first phase of the master plan process sought to develop community consensus on goals and objectives. The ad hoc Master Plan Committee formed by the Neighborhood Council included council members, community leaders, and a neighborhood planner from the city. During Phase I of the planning process, the ad hoc Master Plan Committee and the Land Use Committee of the neighborhood council were responsible for designing and coordinating the collaborative planning initiative with the technical assistance and support from an interdisciplinary city planning staff. The Master Plan Committee members were also collectively responsible for writing the draft Chinatown Community Plan at the conclusion of the first phase of the master plan process.

A consultant was provided for and retained by the neighborhood council for technical assistance in strategic organizing during the critical initial stage of planning. The master plan effort was further augmented with the expertise and the insight offered by other council members, community leaders, and advocates from the business, service, and housing sectors of Chinatown. In addition to focus group discussions, workshops, small group sessions, and regular progress reports at the open neighborhood council meetings, the neighborhood council and the city also co-sponsored several special community-wide meetings. These outreach efforts have been supplemented with direct mailing, media reports, and special serial discussions published by Chinese and bi-lingual newspapers.

While community participation was being organized by the neighborhood council, the BRA retained a consultant to help conduct the four-part planning survey on housing conditions, business and employer characteristics, land uses, and user characteristics. The findings are utilized to develop an integral and up-to-date planning database for Chinatown. Six community service agencies also participated in a survey on employment expectations and opportunities for Asian Americans that was sponsored by the neighborhood council with funding from the city's Neighborhood Job Trust. A transportation consultant was retained to work with the community on a preliminary traffic study of local conditions and commercial activities.

The first phase of the master plan process culminated with the adoption of the Draft Chinatown Community Plan by the Chinatown community in March of 1988. This draft plan established community goals, objectives, and policies for housing, land use, business and economic development, community services, and traffic and transportation. These goals and objectives also guided the development of specific city planning policies for the Chinatown neighborhood as part of the second phase master plan process.

Community participation continued in the form of small group review and working session with the city planners through the second phase of the joint master plan process which focused on implementation strategies and programs for the realization of the community's vision as expressed in the Draft Chinatown Community Plan. These include the Chinatown Housing Improvement Program (CHIP), the Chinatown District Zoning Plan, and the Chinatown Traffic Improvement Plan and Implementation Program developed with the Boston Transportation Department (BTD). A consultant team was retained by the BRA to work with the neighborhood council on a needs assessment and a feasibility study for a community service facility in Chinatown. In addition, consultants for the CNC completed a feasibility study for adaptive housing rehabilitation as well as a strategic plan for entrepreneurial development.

Within the framework established in the draft plan, an Urban Design Studio at MIT conducted a study on land use and development alternatives for the neighborhood council in the Spring of 1988. The study, Chinatown 2000, focused on three specific areas: 1) the expansion of affordable housing in Chinatown and adjacent neighborhoods; 2) cultural and commercial inroads at the Hinge Block where Chinatown intersects with the Midtown Cultural District; and 3) mixed-use development to support economic diversification in the Chinatown Gateway area that is to be created with the reconstruction of the Central Artery.

In particular, the study called out the importance of reconnecting the mostly self-enclosed immigrant neighborhood with the city at large, physically and functionally, and with its own unique heritage as well.

Both the Draft Chinatown Community Plan and Chinatown 2000 provided a critical reference point for the concurrent master planning and rezoning efforts for three adjacent areas: the Midtown Cultural District, the South

Station Economic Development Area, and the Central Artery Corridor.

The Midtown Cultural District Plan and its zoning provisions seek to generate substantial resources to help address community needs in affordable housing, community service, and commercial expansion. The Midtown plan also seeks to better the public realm and traffic conditions which can improve Chinatown's connection with the downtown business center and its access to the Boston Common and the Public Garden.

For the Hinge Block Special Study Area at the intersection of Chinatown and Midtown, a master plan is being developed with the Chinatown and the Midtown communities to explore opportunities in housing, neighborhood businesses, as well as cultural programming that will benefit both neighborhoods.

The ongoing planning and development of the South Station Economic Development Area as well as the Central Artery Corridor is also examining ways to further the Chinatown community's goals in affordable housing, employment, economic diversification, and open space.

The community-based planning framework also applies to the future development planned by institutions in the neighborhood. The New England Medical Center and the Tufts University Health Sciences Schools in Chinatown are currently developing their respective master plans within the planning context established by the Draft Chinatown Community Plan. Institutional land use and development will support the common goals of enhancing the quality of life for the Chinatown community and the continued growth of the neighborhood.

The final adoption of the Chinatown Community Plan and Zoning Amendments by the City will represent the ultimate achievement of the historic joint planning effort for the neighborhood. The community-based master plan approach enables the city to address the primary community issues of downtown encroachment, institutional expansion, and public construction which impact the Chinatown neighborhood. The Chinatown Community Plan and its zoning provision will embody the common vision and community spirit that has evolved through this unprecedented grassroots master planning effort in Chinatown.

3 A VISION OF GROWTH

Chinatown today is bounded by the Surface Artery and Southeast Expressway to the east, Massachusetts Turnpike to the South, Tremont Street to the West, and Essex Street to the north. In addition to being home to over five thousand residents, it also hosts more than forty community organizations and over one hundred and eighty businesses and stores which serve the Asian community in the metropolitan Boston area. With the continued growth of the Asian community in New England, Chinatown seeks to grow as the residential, cultural, service, and commercial center of that community.

Its central location, distinctive cultural environs, and the well-established social, economic, and service network makes Chinatown an ideal place of residence, employment, commerce, and service for the newly arrived Asian immigrants. The neighborhood's unique ambience together with the ethnic food, goods, and services also continue to attract large numbers of Asian visitors, scholars, students and residents that congregated in this academic and high-tech core of New England.

These Asian visitors and patrons are increasingly joined by a growing number of non-Asian visitors and shoppers which will increase further with the revitalization of the nearby Midtown Cultural District and the South Station Economic Development Area.

Recent demographic studies indicated that Asians in Boston will more than double from fifteen thousand in 1987 to about thirty-three thousand in 2000, accounting for about 5 percent of the city's population. Meanwhile, Asians in the Commonwealth are expected to increase at an annual rate of 4.7 percent between 1980 and 2000, compared to 0.3 percent of the overall growth rate in the state.

Of equal significance as the growth in Asian population is the increasing heterogeneity of the immigrant community. Recent immigration trends have shown that Chinese immigrants from China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan will be closely matched by Indochinese refugees, including ethnic Chinese, from Cambodia and Vietnam.

Throughout the last decade, these new immigrants were joined by Asians migrating from other states for better economic prospects made possible by a growth economy that offers advanced high-tech positions as well as manual work demanding only limited English proficiency. Diversity in the Asian community is further enhanced as the continued inflow of new immigrants parallels with

the emergence of the second and third generations of Asian Americans.

The traditional functions and roles of Chinatown among the Asian community are bound to continue to evolve in the new decade. While the new demands will be partly met by Asian satellites outside of Chinatown, the neighborhood's easy access, central location and historic presence as an Asian anchor in the city continue to place it at the forefront in addressing the varied demands from its traditional and new constituencies.

However, Chinatown is already the most densely populated neighborhood in the city. The many neighborhood streets in its thriving business center suffer from chronic congestion while pedestrian safety in the heavily concentrated residential area has been threatened. Excess demands for affordable housing and essential community services have been long standing.

The limited land resources totaling about forty-six acres in the neighborhood have been hard pressed to meet a number of contending demands, including institutional development, housing, business expansion, community facilities, open space, and parking for businesses and institutional users. To accommodate and allow for growth and changes, Chinatown needs to expand not only functionally but also physically.

As envisioned, Chinatown's future growth will branch out in many directions, including the Midtown Cultural District, the Massachusetts Turnpike Air-rights, and the Chinatown Gateway area that will be restored with the reconstruction of the Central Artery.

The Chinatown community looks toward the Midtown Cultural District primarily for the continued expansion of neighborhood businesses, entrepreneurial development, employment, cultural facilities, and housing. The neighborhood looks towards air rights over the Massachusetts Turnpike and the South End for affordable housing, community facilities, and open space that can be shared with the nearby residential areas in the Bay Village and the South End neighborhood. In particular, Chinatown looks toward reclaiming the Chinatown Gateway site previously lost to the construction of the Southeast Expressway in the 1950s to extend significantly its land base for economic diversification, business expansion, affordable housing, and open space.

This vision of growth has guided the development of the Chinatown Community Plan and zoning provision for

housing, community service, business and economic development, land use, urban design, open space, historic preservation, and traffic and transportation. The Chinatown Community Plan seeks to solidify the existing land base of Chinatown and the traditional social, economic, and service infrastructure of the community. Furthermore, the Chinatown Community Plan seeks to ensure opportunities and resources for future growth and diversification as the Chinatown community continues to evolve through the 1990s and beyond.

III. ACHIEVING THE PLAN

CHINATOWN DISTRICT ZONING AMENDMENTS

The zoning plan sets forth the legal guidelines for building height, density, and land use for future development in Chinatown. As a means to implement the Chinatown Community Plan, new zoning provisions are specifically established for the Chinatown neighborhood.

Business and Economic Development: Neighborhood businesses are encouraged to expand into the old Combat Zone area and the Hinge Block, and major new and large scale commercial and mixed-use development is under consideration for the Gateway site, providing jobs and economic expansion and growth. Specifically, the zoning plan provides density incentive for the development of community services for long-term use; neighborhood business opportunities in large commercial development; and expansion opportunities for existing business in the commercial core of Chinatown.

Land Use and Urban Design: To protect the existing commercial and residential mixed-use environment of Chinatown, a number of uses have been selected for regulation by floors. Chinatown is a neighborhood in which uses vary by floor; a store may be in the basement, a restaurant on the first floor, and residences above. Vertical zoning allows for commercial establishments on the lower levels, while protecting the residences above. Furthermore, certain uses are also regulated by gross floor area. to provide for large-scale establishments while maintaining the rich variety resulted from the many modestly-scaled businesses that distinguishes the neighborhood.

Uses that are regulated by floor and by size include community retail uses, community uses, cultural uses, educational uses, general retail uses, office uses, service uses, take-out, and trade shop. Restaurant uses are regulated by floor area only.

Appropriate design guidelines are also proposed for building set-back to enhance the continuity of streetscape. To help reinforce street-level activities and vitality of the pedestrian environment in the Beach Street and Harrison Avenue commercial core of Chinatown,

a minimum 60 percent transparency guideline is proposed for the street wall of a ground floor establishment with more than 5000 square feet of gross floor area.

Open Space Districts: To protect and expand public parks, recreation areas, and green spaces in Chinatown, four permanent open space zones are proposed: the Gateway Park and the Gateway Park Expansion Area in the Commercial Chinatown area, the Tai-Tung Park (116 Tyler Street) in the Residential Chinatown area, and the Pagoda Park in the Chinatown Gateway area.

The Gateway Park will be expanded when the Central Artery ramp is closed. New parks will be added along the edge of the district on Hudson and Kneeland Streets and on the Turnpike air-rights. Creative provisions for open space will be required with each new housing development. Additional open space areas may be designated as a result of the comprehensive planning study for the Special Study Areas.

As-Of-Right Height and Density Regulations: A proposed project within Chinatown, with the exception of the protection areas, special study areas, and planned development areas, is allowed an as-of-right building height of 80 feet (6 stories) and FAR 6 (gross floor area about 6 times the building site).

With design review, building height can increase to 100 feet (8 stories) and building density to FAR 7, except in the Institutional Subdistrict where building height can increase to 125 feet (about 9 stories with higher floor-to-floor clearance required for medical facilities) and density to FAR 8. These regulations will protect the scale and character of the residential, commercial, and institutional areas in Chinatown, while providing room for further growth and expansion.

Protection Areas: The historic and cultural legacies of Chinatown's buildings and streets will be preserved while allowing for incremental changes through the creation of three Protection Areas. These include Liberty Tree National Register District, the Beach/Knapp Street National Register District, and the Historic Chinatown area.

The Historic Chinatown area has essentially retained the tight-knit urban scale that reflects the neighborhood's origin dated from the 19th century. Most of the area has been developed on 20' x 70' lots originally divided for row houses. The streets are mostly between 25' to 40' wide, including sidewalks. More than 90 percent of the

existing buildings are 65' high or less, and all are under 80'.

Building heights will follow the historical precedent of 65 feet (5 stories) while building densities will be limited to FAR 6. With design review, building height and densities can reach 80' (about 6 stories) and FAR 7. Within these areas building design must be sympathetic to the historic fabric of the area.

Planned Development Area: To allow growth that will benefit the Chinatown community, the new zoning designates Planned Development Areas (PDA) in the Residential Chinatown area, the Turnpike Air-Rights, and the Chinatown Gateway areas. A PDA is an area where a more flexible zoning law is established to encourage desirable, large-scale growth on under-utilized sites. The purpose of establishing PDAs are: to encourage the creation of affordable housing, open space, and cultural facilities; to create community facilities and provide community services; to furnish day care facilities; to provide for neighborhood economic development and commercial expansion which is compatible with adjacent uses, and to provide connections between Chinatown and adjacent areas of the city.

Each proposed project must adhere to a development plan which is approved only after public hearings by the BRA and the Zoning Commission. Upon approval, a project within a PDA can increase its building height and density to 175' and FAR 6 in PDA I, Residential Chinatown; 250' and FAR 6 in PDA II, Turnpike Air-Rights; or 300' and FAR 10 in PDA III, Chinatown Gateway/South Bay Interchange.

Both PDAs in the Turnpike Air-Rights area and the Chinatown Gateway area are also designated as Special Study Areas to allow for continued planning analysis and refinements before permanent zoning regulations are recommended.

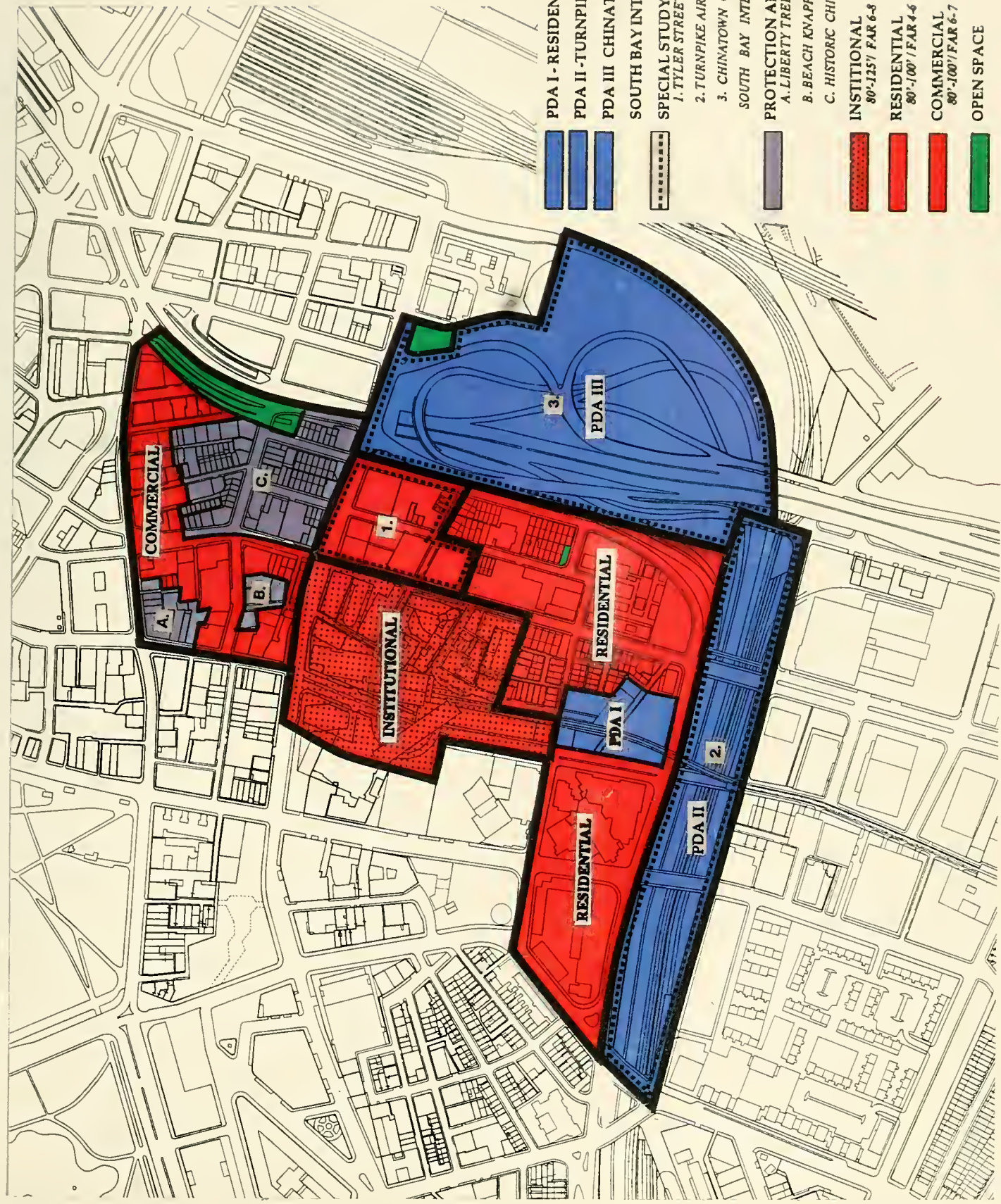
Special Study Areas: Comprehensive planning studies will be conducted for three Special Study Areas in Chinatown: the Tyler Street Special Study Area, the Massachusetts Turnpike Special Study Area, and the Chinatown Gateway Special Study Area.

All three areas face major changes as a result of the transportation construction projects which are still evolving including: the reconstruction of the Central Artery effecting Hudson Street and Kneeland Street; the Orange Line Replacement Service impacting the Massachusetts Turnpike Air-Rights area; and the new ramps

off Marginal Road and Herald Street proposed by the city to relieve neighborhood streets from regional traffic generated by the reconstructed Central Artery. In addition, all three areas offer the possibility of accommodating redirected and controlled institutional expansion away from the Chinatown core, while contributing to the quality of life for the nearby residential neighborhoods.

Permanent zoning regulations for the Special Study Areas will be proposed at the end of the studies. The planning goals and objectives for these areas are:

- o Tyler Street Special Study Area: balance and integrate institutional development, housing, community services, and businesses.
- o Chinatown Gateway Special Study Area: balance the different needs for housing resources, economic diversification, entrepreneurial development, open space, and possibly institutional growth.
- o Turnpike Air-Rights Special Study Area: extend the existing residential areas and create community services and open space to benefit the abutting communities, including Chinatown, South End, and Bay Village.



- PDA I - RESIDENTIAL FAR 6
- PDA II - TURNPIKE AIR RIGHTS 250' / FAR 6
- PDA III - CHINATOWN GATEWAY /
- SOUTH BAY INTERCHANGE 300' / FAR 10
- SPECIAL STUDY AREAS
 - 1. TYLER STREET 80'-125' FAR 6-8
 - 2. TURNPIKE AIR RIGHTS
 - 3. CHINATOWN GATEWAY
 - SOUTH BAY INTERCHANGE
- PROTECTION AREA
 - A. LIBERTY TREE 65'-80' FAR 6-7
 - B. BEACH KNAPP 65'-80' FAR 6-7
 - C. HISTORIC CHINATOWN 65'-80' FAR 6-7
- INSTITUTIONAL
 - 80'-125' FAR 6-8
- RESIDENTIAL
 - 80'-100' FAR 4-6
- COMMERCIAL
 - 80'-100' FAR 6-7
- OPEN SPACE

IV. ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN

A HOUSING

Goal: Preserve and increase quality housing, especially affordable housing, while stabilizing the residential neighborhood through expanding home ownership and developing a mixed-income community with a broad-based leadership.

Objectives:

- 1) Stabilize and upgrade existing housing stock in Chinatown and its immediate vicinities, especially the affordable housing units developed and/or maintained with public subsidies.

- 2) Increase supply of quality housing for low- and moderate-income households in and around Chinatown.

Expand the economic and technical resources for housing development that are programed and designed to meet community preferences needs and preference, including essential support services for new immigrants, elderly, and children.

- 3) Expand resources for the development, ownership and maintenance of affordable housing in Chinatown.

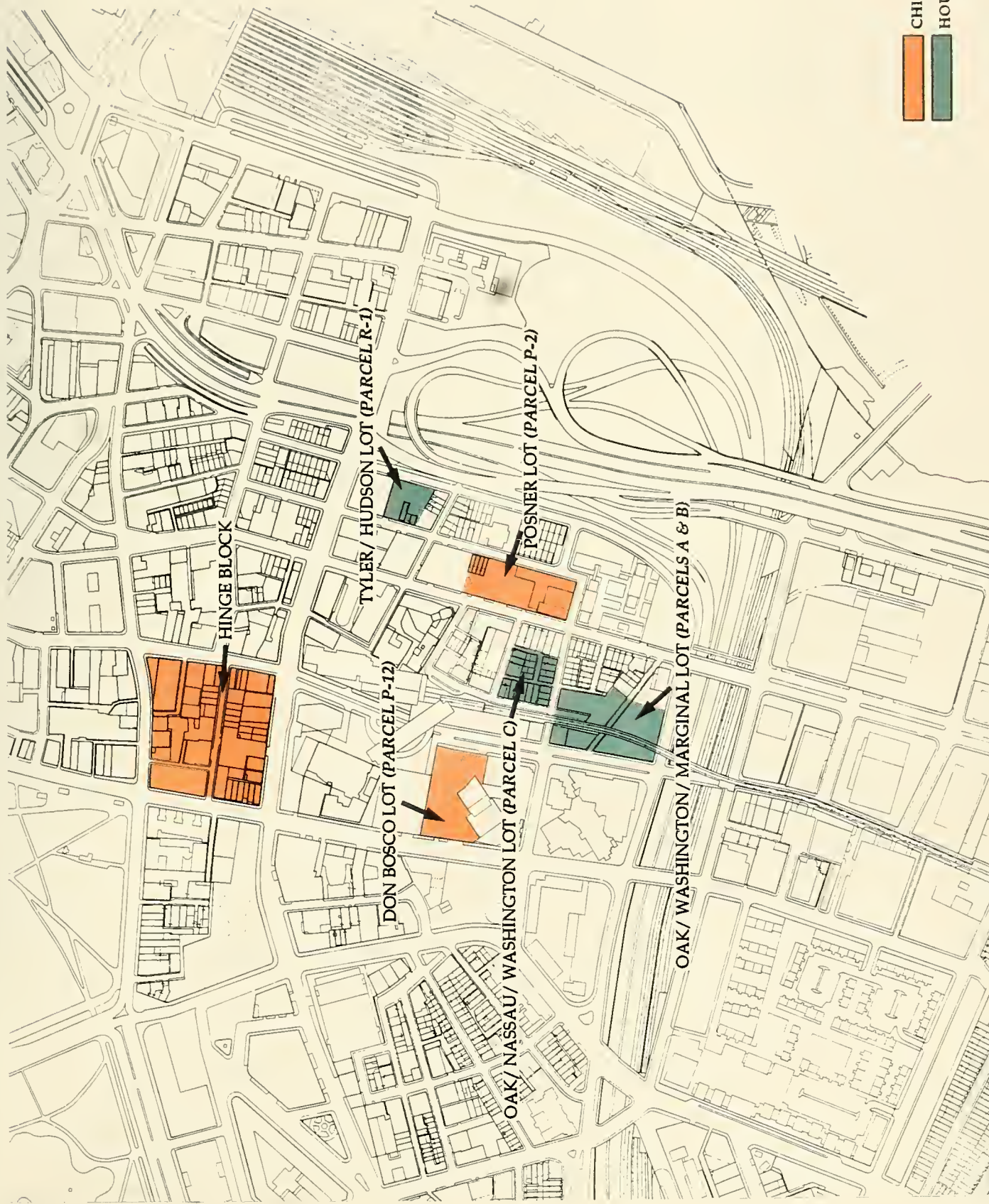
Maximize all potential funding from local, state, federal, and private sources for community-based housing development.

- 4) Reinforce a permanent residential base by expanding community capacity in housing development and property management and increasing alternative forms of home ownership.

Expand alternative form of home ownership by low and moderate income families and individuals while allowing for the controlled development of a mixed-income community.

Chinatown Housing Improvement Program

CHINATOWN HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CHIP)



CHINATOWN HOUSING AREA
HOUSING IMPROVEMENT SITE

B COMMUNITY SERVICES

Goal: Enable community members and residents to be self-sufficient and support the continued development of the immigrant community with quality service programs and facilities.

Objectives:

- 1) Facilitate community awareness of and access to existing services and programs

Facilitate public education on workers rights, civil/legal rights, and public programs and services, such as SSI and welfare.

- 2) Enhance and expand community services and facilities for information, advocacy, consultancy, education, and other supports that are essential to the continued development of the immigrant community.

Initiate and encourage interagency cooperation to address community needs and plan for the most effective utilization of existing resources, while also working to create new programs.

- 3) Enhance and increase the financial, physical and human resources of community service agencies.

Allocate community space in new construction or rehabilitation in the Chinatown-South Cove area, increase financial resources from the public and private sectors, and enhance the organizational capacity of service providers by building and maintaining qualified bilingual staff.

Chinatown Community Service Facility

C BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal: Strengthen and revitalize existing economic base of local businesses and commercial activity, while diversifying business and employment and enhancing the development of the Asian/Chinatown labor force.

Objectives:

- 1) Revitalize the business and commercial core of Chinatown.

Improve public image, physical appearance and utility of the business core, and further enhance Chinatown's position in the Boston tourism industry.

- 2) Facilitate the expansion of the Chinatown businesses into neighboring areas as well as development sites available in the central core of Chinatown.

Create affordable retail, commercial, community and human service space in development occurring in and near the Chinatown-South Cove area.

- 3) Diversify Chinatown's economic base.

Support business growth and professional development beyond traditional choices and access to growth areas in the city, especially those emerging with the new development in and around Chinatown.

- 4) Strengthen and improve worker conditions and status, while at the same time increase productivity, performance, and benefits to preserve and improve Chinatown's work force.

In addition to wages, health insurance, work environment, employer/employee relationship, and day care needs, employment training programs should be increased, information on employment opportunities improved, and institutionalized barriers to employment addressed.

Business and Entrepreneurial Development Strategy

D LAND USE

Goal: Preserve and expand Chinatown's land base for continued development of housing, businesses, services, recreation, and cultural activities.

Objectives

- 1) Respect and reinforce Chinatown as an integral residential neighborhood and business and service center with a distinct historic and cultural identity.

Establish Chinatown as an integral neighborhood planning unit, and enhance the historic land use character unique to the different subareas of Chinatown.

- 2) Control, regulate, and mitigate institutional growth in the neighborhood to prevent further expansion at the expense of neighborhood housing, businesses, services, and open space.

Future institutional development in the Chinatown proper will be primarily limited to clinical programs that depend on the close proximity to the existing medical facility core in the neighborhood.

- 3) Expand the existing Chinatown land base to provide for future growth and development.

Ensure community access to and control of the Chinatown Gateway area and the Massachusetts Turnpike Air-Rights area, two new subdistricts added to the existing Chinatown proper.

- 4) Protect Chinatown residents, local businesses, and community services from displacement as a result of downtown encroachment and real estate speculation.

Broaden and institutionalize community

participation in downtown planning, design, and project review.

Land Use Guidelines for Chinatown Subdistricts

- 1) Historic Chinatown Subdistrict The Historic Chinatown Subdistrict will be reinforced as a unique regional commercial center and a neighborhood common.

- 2) Commercial Chinatown Edge Subdistrict (Including Beach-Knapp Street and Liberty Tree Protection Areas) The Commercial Chinatown Edge Subdistrict will connect Chinatown with the Midtown Cultural District through cultural uses, retails, and services.

- 3) Residential Chinatown Subdistrict The Residential Chinatown Subdistrict will continue to be the primary residential hub for mixed-income families, especially for the new immigrants.

- 4) Institutional Subdistrict The Institutional Subdistrict will confine the growth of a leading medical locus while contributing to the quality of life of the Chinatown residents.

- 5) Massachusetts Turnpike Air-Rights Subdistrict The Turnpike Air-Rights Subdistrict will be a meeting ground for the Chinatown, Bay Village, and South End residential communities, providing open space and growth opportunities.

- 6) Chinatown Gateway Subdistrict The Chinatown Gateway Subdistrict will be the land bridge that extends Chinatown eastward and connects the neighborhood with the South Station transportation and economic center.

E URBAN DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

Goal: Enhance the rich diversity and vitality of the Chinatown built environment while reinforcing its image, visibility, and environmental quality.

Objectives:

- 1) Reinforce the neighborhood's image.

Enhance a unique neighborhood image that reflects the historic and cultural heritage of Chinatown to establish Chinatown in the downtown landscape.

- 2) Improve the district's visibility and orientation.

Improve the visibility and orientation of Chinatown from the adjacent districts, especially from the Midtown Cultural District, the South Station area, and the Leather District.

- 3) Enhance a neighborhood-wide community network.

Buildings, streets, and open space in Chinatown should accommodate a continuous community presence throughout the commercial, the residential, and the institutional cores.

- 4) Create appropriate architectural transitions
 sensitive to the neighborhood character.

At the sensitive edges or sites in Chinatown where different uses or districts converge, building designs should respond to the predominant commercial and residential character and identity of Chinatown.

- 5) Upgrade the environmental quality of the pedestrian-oriented neighborhood.

The pedestrian amenities in the residential and

commercial environment in this densely populated and heavily used neighborhood must be upgraded.

Urban Design and Development Control Guidelines

Urban Design Analysis for Sites and Locales Critical to the Chinatown Neighborhood

- A Chinatown Trade Center (Washington and Harrison)
- B Phillips Square (Harrison and Essex)
- C Kingston/Bedford Plaza
- D Hinge Block (Washington and Beach)
- E Chinatown Crossing (Beach and Harrison)
- F Chinatown Gateway Park (Beach and Surface Artery)
- G Oak Street Community Corridor
- H Chinatown Gateway
- I Turnpike Air-Rights

F HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Goal: To enhance Chinatown as a historic immigrant foothold and a historic neighborhood in Boston dating from the mid-19th century, while allowing for the continued improvement of the Chinatown built environment.

Objectives

- 1) Artifacts, locales, and buildings related to events, institutions, establishments, and personages that are significant to the historical development of the neighborhood should be commemorated in the landscape of Chinatown.
- 2) Encourage designs of new buildings or rehabilitation that reflect the cultural heritage of the community.
- 3) Increase public awareness of the unique historic and cultural heritage of Chinatown to further strengthen the unique streetscape and ambience of the neighborhood.

The Liberty Tree District
Beach/Knapp Street District

Historic Paths and Street-Places in Chinatown

- 1 Ping-On Alley (Alley of Peace and Safety) -- The historic settlement of the first Chinese workers arriving in Boston in 1870s.
- 2 Beach Street -- Chinatown's commercial core and neighborhood common, linking with the Midtown Cultural District and the Leather District.
- 3 Tyler Street -- Chinatown's pedestrian spine linking the commercial core and the residential core.
- 4 Oak Street -- Chinatown community corridor linking housing, community services, and schools.

G OPEN SPACE

Goal: Create a variety of open spaces and an improved public realm to serve the divergent social and recreational needs of Chinatown's residents, workers, shoppers, and visitors.

Objectives:

- 1) Increase accessible quality open space in Chinatown through the improvement of existing facilities and the creation of new facilities.

The location, design, and management of the various open space facilities should provide accessibility, safety, and comfort for Chinatown users.

- 2) Extend the open space network beyond the neighborhood confines.

Extend the network of green open spaces from Chinatown to the nearby Midtown Cultural District, the Boston Common, the Public Garden, and further along the South West Corridor.

- 3) Explore alternative green places.

Alternative forms of green places should be amply and creatively provided throughout the public environment in Chinatown.

- 4) Create a neighborhood common and culturally sensitive open space to enhance community identity through the open space.

A neighborhood common should be created to reinforce the sense of community that is shared by the residents and workers in Chinatown with the shoppers and visitors from the Asian community at large.

- 5) Encourage the versatility of design and the Flexibility

in facility management.

Versatile design and flexible management of both public and private facilities should be encouraged to increase the capacity of the limited open space and recreation facilities in Chinatown.

Existing Open Space and Outdoor Recreation
Facilities critical to Chinatown residents

- 1 Chinatown Gateway Park on Hudson
- 2 Oxford Street Pocket Park
- 3 Pagoda Park off Kneeland
- 4 Tyler/Tai-Tung Sitting Corner
- 5 Acorn Day Care Center Tot Lot on Oak Street
- 6 Tai-tung Village Courtyard off Harrison
- 7 Mass Pike Tower Courtyard off Tremont
- 8 Quincy School Terrace off Washington
- 9 Vegetable Garden at Oak and Washington
- 10 NEMC Biewend Building entry plaza
- 11 NEMC Siebolt Plaza on Washington
- 12 Eliot Norton Park adjoining Midtown,
Chinatown, and Bay Village

H TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION*

Goal: Maximize transportation access to and from Chinatown, upgrade the neighborhood's pedestrian environment, vehicular circulation, and parking, and prevent further land loss as a result of transportation infrastructure construction.

Objectives:

- 1) Manage traffic generated from new developments and transportation projects in and around Chinatown.

Ensure community participation in transportation planning and traffic impact review to prevent further land loss, isolation, and other adverse environmental impact on Chinatown.

- 2) Improve vehicular circulation and pedestrian movement on neighborhood streets

Reducing regional and by-pass traffic on neighborhood streets and provide safe pedestrian crossings.

- 3) Enhance the unique street ambience resulted from a multitude of pedestrian uses and street activities.

Upgrade commercial loading, unloading, and deliveries; and improve suburban workers' pick-up and drop-off services.

- 4) Provide adequate parking for the residents, workers, shoppers, and visitors of Chinatown.

Reduce illegal parking by increase parking resources and efficient use and management of parking facilities.

* The traffic component of the Chinatown Community Plan has been developed by the Boston Transportation Department (BTD) together with the CNC and the BRA.

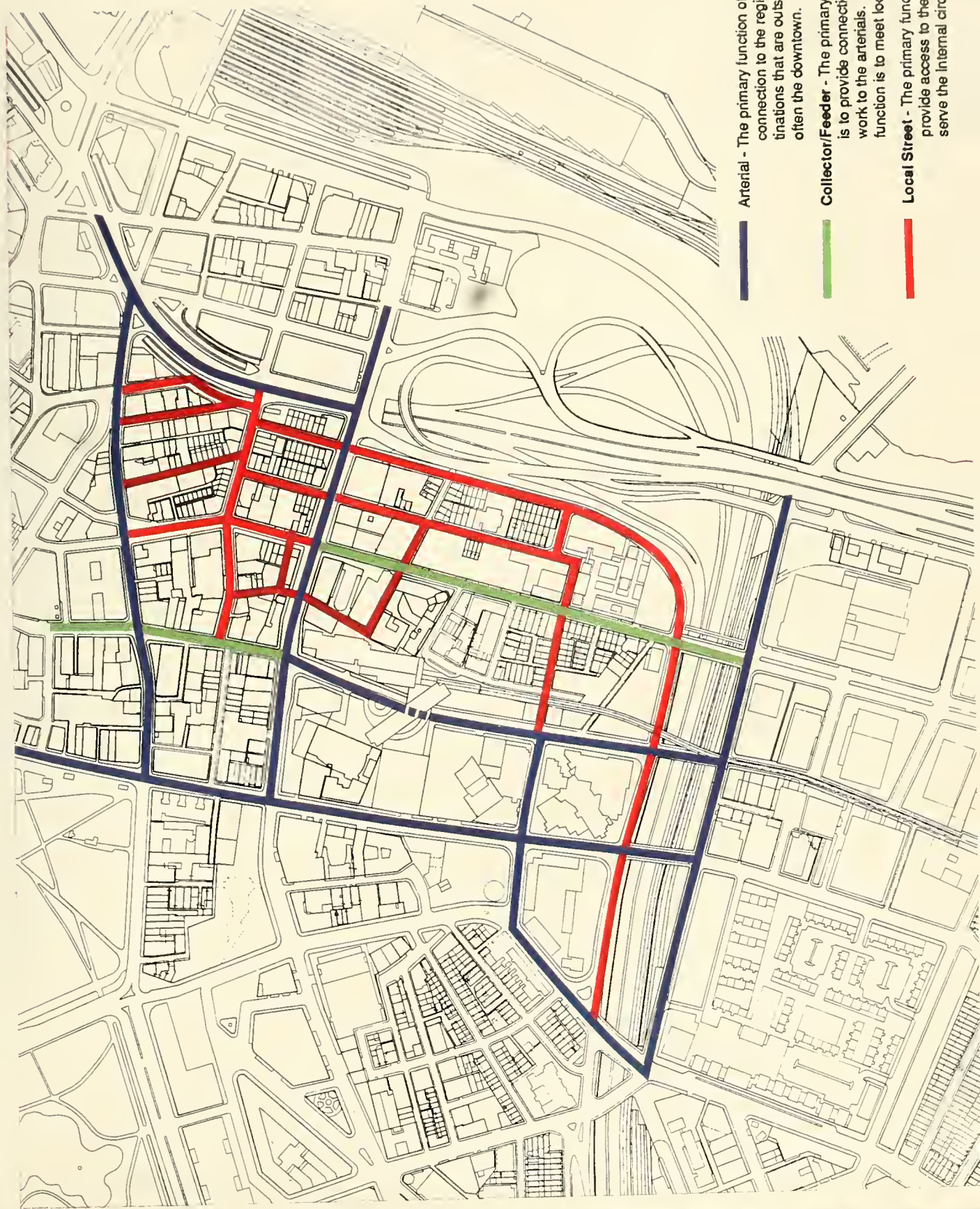
- 5) Maintain and upgrade the public transportation access to jobs and recreation resources beyond the immediate vicinities of the neighborhood.

Provide better transportation services and transit environment for Chinatown residents and other users while reduce vehicular traffic and parking demand.

Chinatown Traffic Improvement Plan

Boston Transportation Department (BTD)

CHINATOWN STREET CLASSIFICATION



- Arterial** - The primary function of these streets is to provide connection to the regional highway network or destinations that are outside the neighborhood and often the downtown.
- Collector/Feeder** - The primary function of these roadways is to provide connection from the local street network to the arterials. In addition, a secondary function is to meet local circulation needs.
- Local Street** - The primary functions of these streets is to provide access to the abutting land uses and to serve the internal circulation needs of the area.



